CHAIKA: THE COFFIN PRINCESS

II

Original Story
ICHIROU SAKAKI

Art
SHINTA SAKAYAMA

Character Design
NAMANIKU ATK (NITROPLUS)

WHY DO YOU PUSH YOUR TRAINING SO HARD THAT YOUR HAND ENDS UP LIKE THIS?

.....TORU, CAN I ASK YOU SOME-THING?

IT'S 'COS...

COME ON, JASMIN. D'YOU REALLY HAFTA ASK?

...SOMEDAY I'M GONNA GO INTO BATTLE AND KILL LOTS OF PEOPLE!

episode 5:

Proof-of-Being-Alive, Proof of Having Lived

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TECHNICALLY, IT'S A FEW HAMLETS ALL LUMPED TOGETHER UNDER ONE NAME.

THE VILLAGE OF ACURA IS A SMALL HAMLET OUT IN THE MOUN-TAINS.

THE PLACE IS RELA-TIVELY INACCES-SIBLE—A LITERAL "HIDDEN VILLAGE."

TO MAKE SURE THE VILLAGE RECEIVES A REGULAR FLOW OF NEWS AND INFORMATION, IT'S BECOME CUS-TOMARY FOR A FEW TRUSTED CARAVANS TO BE ADMITTED WHEN THEY PASS BY ON THEIR TRADE ROUTES.

GOTO ゴト

GOTO (CLACK) ゴト

GOTO ゴト

BUT IT'S NOT AS IF IT'S TOTALLY CUT OFF FROM THE REST OF CIVILIZA-TION.

GOTO ゴト

GOTO ゴト

GOTO ゴト

THERE.

ALL DONE. ♪

AKARI-CHAN, WHERE'S TORU?

GASA (RUSTLE)

COME TO THINK OF IT...

IT'S TRUE WHAT THEY SAY— GIRLS NEED TO ACCES-SORIZE!

...

GUNI (SQUISH)

MONI (GROPE)

MONI

MONI

MONI

IF I'D WANTED TO KILL YOU, YOU WOULD'VE DIED THREE TIMES BY NOW!

YOU LEFT YOUR-SELF WIDE OPEN, JAS-MIN.

OH, COME ON. IT'S NOT LIKE THEY'RE GONNA POP OFF.

AH HA HA HA!

BA (FWIP)

TORU! WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING !!?

GO (WHAM)

NGH!

AKARI!!... YOU'RE ALREADY GIVING HIM ONE.

DO

UKI!

GH!

DO CHIKARA

DEAR BROTHER, YOU'RE GONNA GET A SPANKING LATER!

JAS-MIN.

OWW...

WELCOME BACK.

IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN.

IT'S GOOD TO BE BACK, TORU.

YES.

ONE OF THE GIRLS WHO RODE WITH THE TRADING CARA-VANS.

JASMIN OOLO.

THE CHILDREN OF ACURA LIVED A ROUGH LIFE, THEIR DAYS PACKED WITH TRAINING, TRAINING, AND MORE TRAINING. THE CARAVANS THAT CAME THROUGH ONCE A MONTH WERE ONE OF THE FEW THINGS WE HAD TO LOOK FORWARD TO.

THE STORIES THEY BROUGHT FROM OUTSIDE SEEMED LIKE FANTASTIC TALES THAT DESCRIBED THE WONDERS OF A WHOLE OTHER WORLD.

...I WOULD ALWAYS ASK JASMIN THE SAME QUESTION.

BACK THEN...

WHAT IS IT, TORU?

...HAVE YOU SEEN ANY BATTLES?

IN THE OUTSIDE WORLD...

AND EVERY TIME, WITHOUT FAIL...

...HER ONLY RESPONSE WAS TO SHAKE HER HEAD SADLY.

THE ANSWER... TO YOUR QUESTION.

... TORU ...

WHAT IS IT, JASMIN?

YOU TOLD ME YOU'RE GOING TO KILL LOTS OF PEOPLE SOMEDAY, AND THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT IT WAS I SAW.

...I HAVE SEEN BATTLES.

HURTING EACH OTHER...

... PEOPLE FIGHT-ING...

MANY...

... MANY ...

AND? AND!?

THAT'S ALL.

...I FELT SO SAD FOR THEM.

AND!? WHAT ELSE !?

I FELT SAD FOR THEM, AND THAT'S ALL.

NO, THAT REALLY IS ALL.

TCH! ...YOU NEVER ANSWER MY QUES-TIONS.

FOR THE PEOPLE KILLING... ...AND THE PEOPLE BEING KILLED.

SO (STROKE)

...!

THERE REALLY WASN'T ANYTHING MORE...

TORU?

ZA (ZSH)

BA (YANK)

!

GA (WHACK)

GO (WHUD)

GA

GYUUU (SQUEEZE)

ZA

ZA

GUJA (SCRNCH)

TORU!!

STOP IT...! WHAT GOOD DOES IT DO TO HURT YOURSELF!?

YOU WOULD NEVER UNDERSTAND, JASMIN!

OUR MISSION— ACURA'S MISSION! THE PROOF THAT WE'RE ALIVE IS...!

GYUU (SQUEEZE)

ooo

JASMIN... DO YOU... LIKE... BEING ALIVE?

... SURE I DO.

I TRAVEL FROM PLACE TO PLACE AND SEE AND HEAR SO MANY THINGS.

I HAVE SO MANY DIFFERENT EXPERI-ENCES.....

AND THAT'S ENOUGH FOR ME.

BUT YOU NEVER MAKE YOUR MARK ANYWHERE! YOU NEVER LEAVE ANY-THING BEHIND!

THAT'S NOT TRUE.

I MAY NOT HAVE A PLACE ON THE BATTLEFIELD LIKE YOU WILL, TORU, BUT I CAN STILL LEAVE PROOF THAT I'VE LIVED.

THE PEOPLE I MEET WILL REMEMBER ME.

THAT INCLUDES YOU TOO, OF COURSE.

OR...

...IF I HAVE A BABY.....

...THEN THAT CHILD WILL BE THE PROOF THAT I'VE LIVED.

AND THEN WHEN THAT CHILD HAS CHILDREN...

...THEN THOSE CHILDREN— MY GRAND-CHILDREN...

...WILL BE PROOF THAT I LIVED.

THAT'S HOW OUR LIVES ARE CONNECTED.

.....THINKING BACK ON IT...

First ... ... love?

URK!

...SHE MIGHT HAVE BEEN MY FIRST LOVE.

AND SHE WAS, LIKE, TEN YEARS OLDER THAN ME!

OH! ER!

IT WAS JUST, Y'KNOW... SHE WAS IN LOVE WITH ONE OF THE GUYS IN HER CARAVAN.

?

UH, WHY AM I TRYING SO HARD TO DEFEND MYSELF?

SO, YOU KNOW!

IT WAS PUPPY LOVE. LIKE HOW A LITTLE KID GETS A CRUSH ON SOMEONE OLDER. HAPPENS ALL THE TIME.

HUH?

OH...

TORU. THERE IS... ... MORE?

...EVERY TIME SHE CAME TO ACURA, HER BELLY WAS BIGGER.

.....ANYWAY, SO ALL THAT HAPPENED, AND THEN ONE DAY, JASMÍN SHOWED UP PREGNANT WITH THE GUY'S KID.

THE MERCHANTS LOOKED FORWARD TO SEEING THE BABY, OF COURSE, AND SO DID EVERYONE IN ACURA.

YEAH.

I GUESS SO.

Little!

Cute!

Baby!

BUT...

...THE NEXT TIME THEY CAME TO ACURA...

...JASMIN DIED.

DIED...

HOW...?

SHE WAS MURDERED.

BY BANDITS OR SOMETHING. I DON'T KNOW WHAT THEY WERE.

I REMEMBER IT LIKE IT WAS YESTERDAY.

ZAAAAA (FSHHHH)

BASHA

BASHA (SPLASH)

ZAAAAAA

...

...!!

BA
(GRAB)

KA
(FLASH)

AAH

NNGH

AANGH

GOPU (GULP)

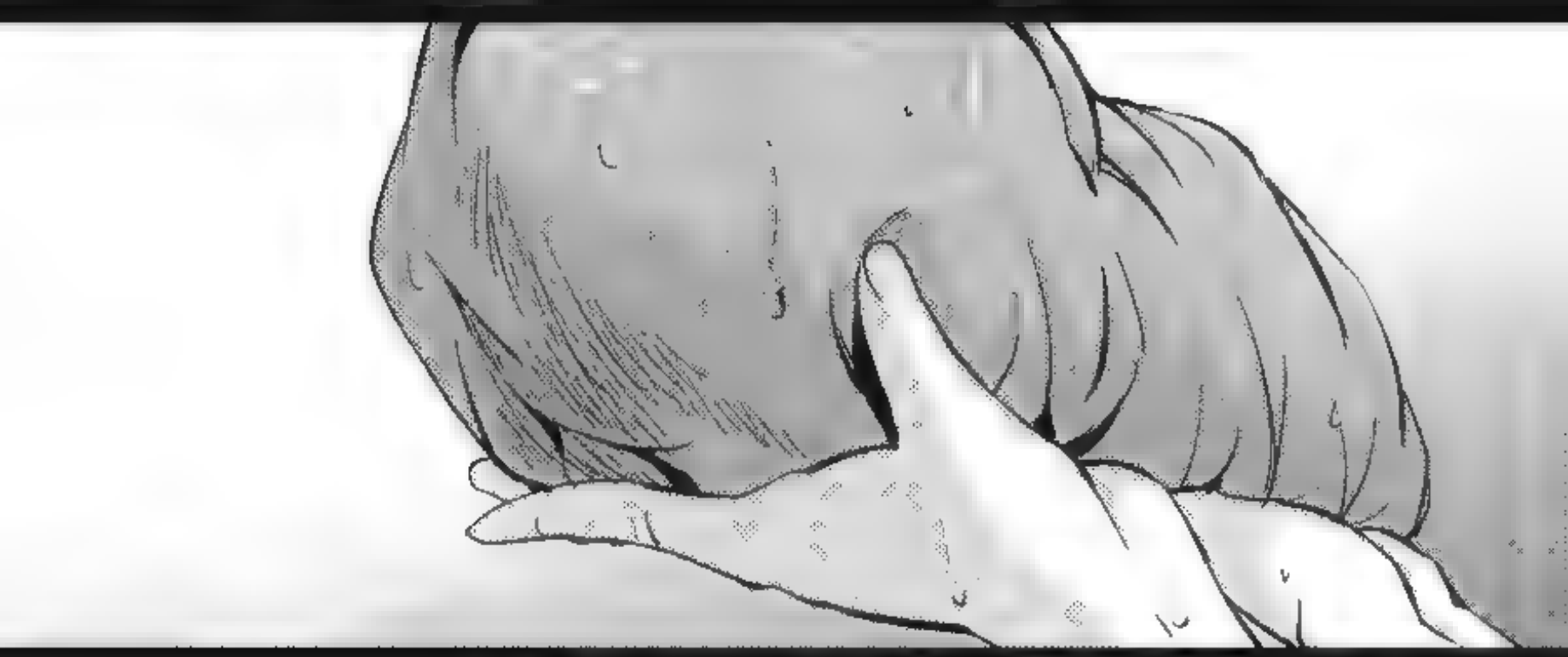
AAAAAH!

THE ONLY SOUND OUT OF HER MOUTH WAS SOME UNINTELLIGIBLE GROANING.

SHE HAD BEEN RUN THROUGH. THE SPEAR OR WHATEVER IT WAS WAS STILL STICKING OUT OF HER STOMACH.

THE SMALL LIFE THAT SHE HAD BROUGHT INTO THE WORLD AFTER CARRYING IT INSIDE HER FOR NINE MONTHS.

SHE WAS TRYING TO GIVE ME A TINY BUNDLE OF CLOTH.



"PLEASE. SAVE MY BABY."

ザアアアアアア…

ZAAAAAAAA
(FSHHHHH)

THEN THERE WERE TWO CORPSES.

ANYWAY, ONCE YOU'RE DEAD...

...IT'S ALL OVER.

OR MAYBE SHE HAD, BUT SHE COULDN'T ACCEPT IT.

MAYBE JASMÎN HADN'T REALIZED.

IT'S JUST A MEANINGLESS CYCLE.

A DREAM THAT FADES AND IS GONE. AND YET...

...LIVE...

...AND DIE...

PEOPLE LIVE...

...AND DIE...

ALL YOUR DESPERATE EFFORTS...

...THE VALUE OF THE MIRACLES IN YOUR LIFE.

IT ALL EVAPORATES INTO NOTHING.

—TORU.

TORU!

WE KILLED EVERY LAST ONE OF THEM AND LEFT THEIR BODIES TO ROT ON THE HIGH-WAY.

...AFTER THAT, THE WHOLE VILLAGE WENT OUT TO FIND THE BASTARDS...

...YEAH.

THOUGH ALL I DID WAS KEEP WATCH OVER THE VILLAGE.

...YOU TAKE...

...RE-VENGE?

BUT...

...IT DIDN'T BRING JASMIN OR HER BABY BACK TO LIFE.

JASMIN'S LIFE ENDED MEANINGLESSLY, AND SHE DIDN'T LEAVE ANY KIND OF LEGACY.

AND THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO TO CHANGE THAT.

SO I WANTED TO CHANGE THE WORLD.

I WANTED TO LEAVE SOME PROOF THAT I HAD LIVED.

I WANTED TO ACCOMPLISH SOMETHING, LEAVE A LEGACY.

I WANTED TO LIVE A LIFE THAT WOULD LIGHT MY SOUL ON FIRE, AND THEN BURN IT ALL AWAY.

AFTER JASMIN DIED, I COULDN'T WAIT FOR MY FIRST CAMPAIGN.

I COULD DO THINGS THAT KNIGHTS AND SOLDIERS COULDN'T.

I JUST ...

I WANTED TO FEEL LIKE I HAD CHANGED THE WORLD.

BUT...

...THE WAR ENDED.

ギシ
GISHI (CREAK)

ペタ
PETA (STEP)

NN?

FIGHTING IS NO LONGER LOOKED UPON FAVORABLY.

...IN THE END, JASMIN'S DEATH... AND MY LIFE AS A SABOTEUR— IT WAS ALL A WASTE.

KORON (FWUP)

NO-!

WHAT ARE YOU DO—

HUH?

JASMIN-SAN HAVE... MEAN-ING.

TORU REMEM-BER.

TORU WORRY.

LONG TIME.

SL SSK

.....

THAT'S WHAT JASMIN SAID...

"THE PEOPLE I MEET WILL REMEMBER ME."

SAD THING.

VERY SAD.

BUT...

THAT WAS...

...JUST A COIN-CIDENCE.

...I THINK IS WHY...

...TORU HELP ME.

I TOLD YOU... IT WAS JUST A FLUKE...

...FOR JASMÍN-SAN.

... THANKFUL ...

...I...

...AM...

JASMÍN OOLO MADE A BIG IMPACT ON MY LIFE.

AND, WELL...

...CHAIKA'S REASONING MIGHT BE A STRETCH, BUT SHE'S NOT NECESSARILY WRONG.

IF GIVING LIFE...

...AND SAVING LIFE...

...ARE BOTH WAYS THAT LIVES MIGHT BE CONNECTED, THEN...

OR MAYBE.....

.....I HATE TO INTERRUPT ...

KOTSU CLACK

GO CRMBL

GO GO GO GO GO GO GO GO GO

...BUT I CONFESS I HAVE A BURNING DESIRE TO KNOW WHAT EXACTLY YOU TWO ARE DOING.

I REALLY WISH YOU'D STOP JUMPING TO CONCLUSIONS— AND VIOLENCE!

WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO SMASH!?

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

HOLD STILL, BROTHER, OR I CAN'T SMASH IT.

UH... AKARI, WE WERE JUST—

episode 5: END

CHAIKA: THE COFFIN PRINCESS

...YOU ALREADY TOLD ME ABOUT THAT.

YAWN...

DID I TELL YOU ABOUT THAT TIME MY KID BROTHER'S BUSINESS WASN'T DOING SO WELL AND I—

OH YEAH...

WELL, IT'S BOUND TO HAPPEN. WITH ALL THE TIME WE SPEND STANDING AROUND...

OH, I DID?

WHAT—

GOTO (CLUNK)

ZU (JAB)

GYU (TUG)

I CAN'T HAVE YOU SLUMPED ON THE FLOOR JUST YET...!

GA (GRAB)

...OOF.

SHURU (SHWIP)

SU (SWFF)

GASA (RUSTLE)

THAT'S MY BROTHER'S SIGNAL.

CHIKA (GLINT)

CHAIKA.

LET'S GO.

MM...!

episode 6:

Uninvited Guest of Honor

THIS IS A FLOOR PLAN OF ABARTH'S MANSION.

...SO... YEAH.

BUT AKARI AND I MADE IT OUR-SELVES, SO IT MIGHT NOT BE TOTALLY ACCURATE.

YOU THINK MAYBE IT'S ABOUT TIME YOU TOLD US?

Hm?

WHAT THIS... "IMPORTANT THING" YOU'RE AFTER REALLY IS.

UM... I...

COME ON, CHAIKA ...

I AM SORRY. ...I DON'T KNOW...

IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, I'D LIKE TO INTERJECT.

SU (SHFF)

I HAVE NO PROB-LEM WITH YOU USING US FOR OUR SABO-TEUR ABILI-TIES...

...BUT HOW CAN YOU EXPECT US TO DO THIS JOB WHEN YOU WON'T EVEN TELL US WHAT OUR TARGET LOOKS LIKE?

YOU ARE LOWERING THE CHANCES OF YOUR OWN MISSION'S SUCCESS.

COME ON, AKARI...

WHAT IF YOUR NEGLIGENCE LEADS TO MY DEAR BROTHER...

...BEING TAKEN CAPTIVE BY THE ENEMY—

GIR. (GRIT)

AKARI... YOU...

I COULDN'T BEAR IT!

—AND THROWN INTO THE DUNGEON, BOUND HAND AND FOOT, VIOLATED, ABUSED, AND BROKEN LIKE AN ANIMAL...!?

AH... NO...

ANYWAY. ARE YOU SURE YOU CAN'T TELL US?

NOT LIKE THAT. UM...

WATA (FLAIL)

WATA

WATA

IMPOR-
TANT
THING...
COLOR.

SHAPE.

I DO
NOT
KNOW
NOW.

I DO
NOT SEE
IT NOW.
IS WHY.

...I WAS
AFRAID
OF
THAT.

KOKU
(NOD)

KOKU

...SO
YOU'LL ONLY
KNOW IT
WHEN YOU
SEE IT?

I
KNOW.

BA
(BOLT)

I...!

BAD!

HMM...

...PER-
SONAL-
LY...

...I'D
RATHER
YOU
STAYED
HERE.

CHAIKA.

JUST PROMISE ME YOU WON'T SLOW US DOWN.

...Yes!

...I HATE TO INTERRUPT THIS TOUCHING MOMENT...

ヒョコ (A) HYOKO (POP)

ビクン BIKUN (FLINCH)

MEEP !?

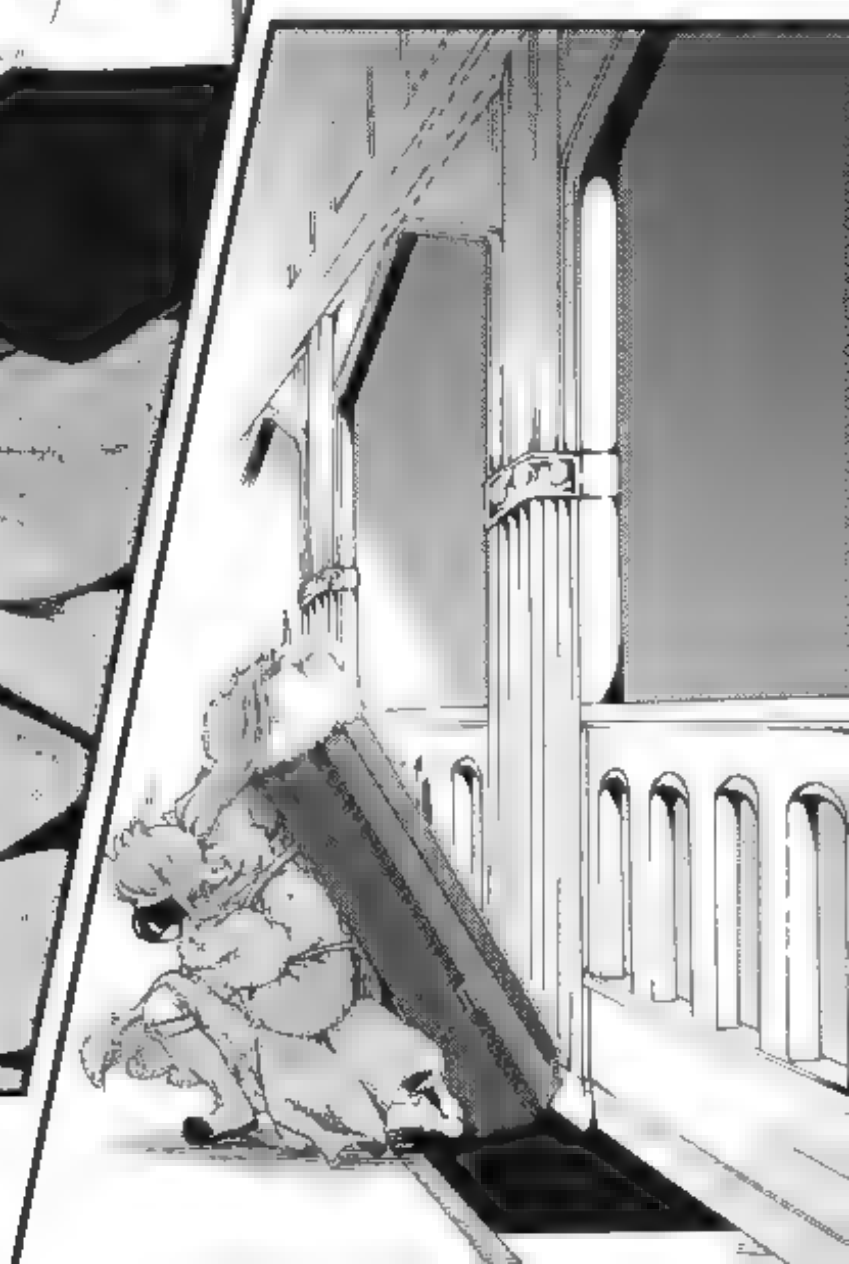
...BUT SURELY YOU'LL BE LEAVING THE COFFIN HERE?

THIS JUST GETS MORE AND MORE DIFFICULT, BROTHER...

ブン BUN

ブン BUN (SHAKE)

HA AH.....



SUU (SSK)

...IT'S AWFULLY QUIET.

I CAST SPELL. SHORT TIME BUT WORKS.

"THE SUCKER."

ERASE FOOT-STEPS.

MANY SOUNDS ERASE!

OF COURSE. YES.

QUIET.

TORU, AKARI, ME.

ALL OF US.

MEEP?

THAT'S NOT EXACTLY WHAT I MEANT...

THEN WHAT?

.....DON'T YOU THINK IT'S STRANGE?

A DISTINGUISHED MAN OF THE GREAT WAR.

ROBERT ABARTH.

MY BROTHER WENT IN BEFORE US, BUT THERE ARE NO SIGNS OF ANY FIGHTING ...

DOES THAT MEAN THE ONLY GUARDS WERE ON THE WATCHTOWER AND AROUND THE PERIMETER?

.....SOME-THING ABOUT THIS MANSION MAKES ME UNEASY.

THIS IS SUPPOSED TO BE THE HOME OF A HERO.

SO WHY IS THE SECURITY SO LIGHT?

...I'VE MADE IT THIS FAR WITHOUT ANY TROUBLE... BUT...

BA CLANGE

OH

...SOMETHING'S OFF...

THE ATMO-SPHERE OF THIS PLACE...

EVERY TIME I TAKE A STEP FORWARD, I FEEL AS IF SOME LIVING ENTITY IS COILING AROUND MY BODY.

AS IF I'M BEING SWAL-LOWED UP BY A GIANT "SOME-THING"...

WELL, THAT'S FINE WITH ME.

GU (GRIP)

ZA (ZSH)

GHI (CREAK)

LOOKING AT IT A DIFFERENT WAY, IT JUST MEANS I'M GETTING CLOSER TO THAT "SOME-THING"...!

...AN OFFICE?

I'VE ALWAYS THOUGHT THIS MANSION LOOKED TACKY FROM THE OUTSIDE.

BUT IT LOOKS LIKE THE MASTER OF THE HOUSE HAS BAD TASTE ALL AROUND.

BA (FWIP)

...!!?

THIEF ...!

HMPH-

...SO YOU'RE ROBERT ...?

HE TOOK ME COMPLETELY BY SURPRISE ...!?

YOU ARE JUST A COUNTRY NOBLE... WHO HAS NO CLASS NOW?

I REJECT YOUR PROPOSAL, AND YOU DON'T WAIT EVEN A DAY BEFORE YOU TRY TO STEAL IT.

WHAT THE HELL IS HE TALKING ABOUT?

.....?

SU (SHFF.

...YOU WANT TO FIGHT ME?

YOU MAY BE A THIEF, BUT I DOUBT YOU ARE A TOTAL AMATEUR.

OH WELL.

I WAS JUST THINKING HOW IT'S NOT MUCH FUN HAVING A TREASURE WHEN YOU'VE NO REASON TO USE IT.

SUU (SSK)

スゥ…

...IF YOU'RE NOT GONNA START THIS, I WILL.

WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?

IF YOU DON'T DODGE THIS, YOU WILL DIE.

THIEF.

JA (ENOOSH)

WHA ...?

DO (SHNK)

GAKO (KRNCH)

OHH...? YOU PARRIED. I'M IM-PRESSED.

BUT...

...I WON'T HOLD BACK WITH THE NEXT ONE.

HE'S...

...A WIZARD ...!?

episode 6: END

CHAIKA: THE COFFIN PRINCESS

GIN (KSHING)

HYU (SWISH)

DO

DO

DO
CDSMHD

OHH. BLOCKED THAT ONE TOO, DID YOU?

YOU ARE CORRECT, SIR.

DID YOU THINK ONLY SWORDSMEN HAD THE PRIVILEGE OF ACHIEVING MILITARY GREATNESS?

WIZ-ARD ...

IS IT THE CHOKER ...?

Episode 71

Chance Encounter with the Past

AND IT'S GOTTA BE MAGIC THAT'S MAKING EVERYTHING IN THE ROOM FLY AT ME.

SO THAT CHOKER IS LIKE A CABLE CONNECTING ROBERT TO A GUNDO...

WHAT KIND OF MAGIC IS THIS ANYWAY!?

WHAT ABOUT THE INCANTA-TIONS?

BUT HOW IS HE USING MAGIC LIKE THAT?

HEH HEH HEH HEH!

HEH HEH.

...HEH.

AH, WELL...

NO MATTER HOW I LOOK AT IT, I CAN'T HELP BUT BE AMUSED.

WHAT'S SO FUNNY?

I, A WIZARD, AM STANDING FACE TO FACE WITH A SWORDSMAN AND OVER-POWERING HIM.

DON'T YOU FIND THAT WONDER-FULLY DROLL?

OH... IS THAT IT?

BA (LUNGE)

DON'T THINK I'LL GO DOWN SO EASY !!

HNGH!

GYURU (WHIRL)

FUWA (LEAP)

TO (TMP)

NGNH ...!?

DUCK AND COUNTER!

IF I GET THE TIMING RIGHT, HE CAN'T DODGE!

GAKUN (LURCH)

!!

SOME-THING'S GOT ME...!?

GIRI (GRIP)

CLEVER LITTLE SNEAK!

FLU

DAN (SLAM)

ANNOY-ING LITTLE FLEA! STOP DARTING AROUND ...!

GH!

DO (SHOONK)

...THIEF!

CAN YOU EVADE THIS?

SHIT!

?!
OVER HERE!
BA (BAM)

JA
(ZWOOSH)

TCH!

!

BITA
(STOP)

...TRY ALL THE TRICKS YOU LIKE, YOU WILL NEVER HIT ME.

ZUZLIN (WHUD)

TO (TNK)

HE DOESN'T NEED A WAND OR ANY INCANTATIONS...AS WIZARDS GO...

...HE'S THE WORST KIND...!

ZW (SHHK)

.....BROTHER, HE'S...

YEAH. BE CAREFUL.

WIZARD!?

!!

HE'S GONNA GET HER!!

CHAIKA! DON'T LET HIM SEE YOUR FACE!

NO!

THERE ARE MORE RATS LURKING ABOUT.....

ガシャン
GASHAN (CLATTER)

HUH...!?

THAT'S IMPOSSI-BLE...

YOU... THAT DAY... I WAS SURE...

YOU WERE DEAD...!

...DEAD?

THIS CAN'T BE HAPPENING...

ZURI (SLUMP)

...
AKARI.

SL
(SHFF)

—I
KNOW.

SHU
(WHSH)

BON
(BWOOM)

PASH! (GRAB)

!?

BUT NOT YET! TARGET STILL—

I KNOW!

BA! (DASH)

TORU!?

CHAIKA, WE'RE PULLING OUT!

WE HAVE TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO BEAT HIM!

DO YOU MEAN TO HAUNT ME...

...GHOST...!?

—THE WHOLE MANSION?
...YOU'RE ABSOLUTELY SURE?
YES.
I THINK.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

MAGIC.

GUNDO...

ZAAA (ZSHHH)

OO

SU (SFF)

SU

...I SEE.

MAN-SION.

ALL MAN-SION.

...IS MAN HIM-SELF.

YES.

THIS MAN-SION ITSELF ...

AND THE REASON HE WASN'T INCANTING SPELLS IS BECAUSE HE DIDN'T HAVE TO...

...AND INCOR-PORATED IT AS A FUNCTION OF HIS MAGIC.

SO HE'S TURNED THE WHOLE MANSION INTO A MEDIUM FOR HIS GUNDO ...

SO WHEN I FELT LIKE I'D BEEN GRABBED BEFORE, THERE REALLY WAS SOMETHING HOLDING ON TO ME.

IF I HAD TO DESCRIBE IT, I'D CALL IT AN "INVISIBLE HAND."

SO ROBERT IS CONNECTED TO THE MANSION THROUGH THAT CHOKER.

THAT'S A PRETTY SAFE ASSUMPTION, RIGHT?

IS THAT WHY THE SECURITY IS SO LIGHT...?

HE JUDGE BY FEEL OF "HANDS."

INVAD-ERS, SOL-DIERS.

CANNOT TELL DIFFER-ENCE?

WHEN AKARI THREW HER KNIVES, HE DROPPED THE FLOATING OBJECTS.

DOES THAT MEAN HE CAN'T ATTACK AND DEFEND AT THE SAME TIME?

SO WE TRULY ARE IN THE PALM OF HIS "HAND."

...YEAH, BUT IT'S ALL JUST SPECU-LATION AT THIS POINT.

SO CHAIKA...

...WHERE WOULD YOU HIDE A GUNDO LIKE THAT?

IS RIGHT AN-SWER!

I THINK TOO.

SOME-WHERE IN MANSION, WE FIND...

... MAIN GUNDO.

I...?

NO POINT PUT OUTSIDE MAN-SION.

BUT SAFE PLACE...

NUCLEUS ...

CENTER OF MANSION.....

YOU TWO GO FIND HIS GUNDO.

I'LL KEEP HIM BUSY.

THAT SET-TLES IT.

AKARI, CHAIKA.

TORU!

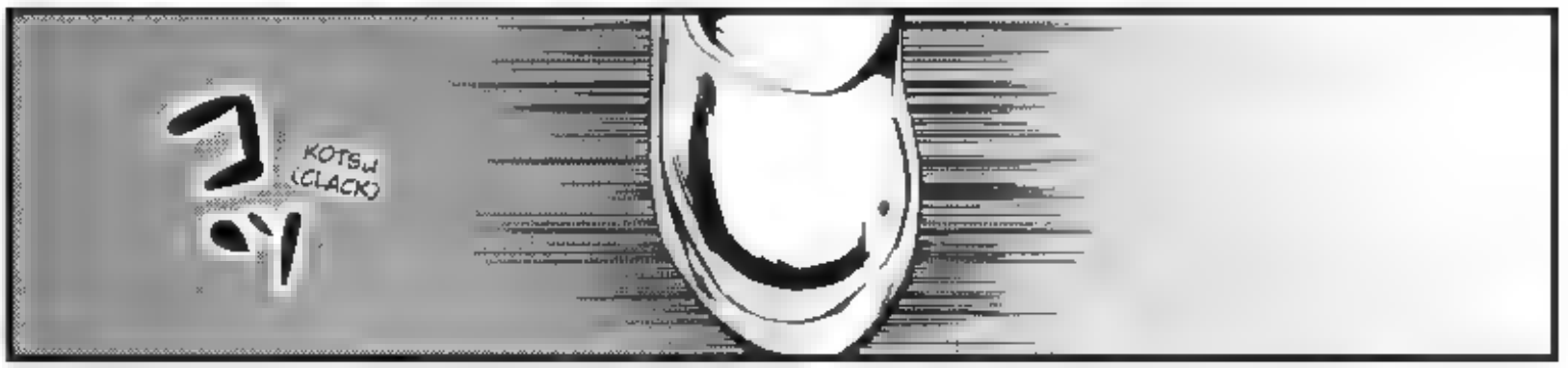
...YOU ARE OKAY ALONE?

I'LL BE FINE.

THIS TIME, WE'LL GET THE JOB DONE.

URK!?

...I'M MORE WORRIED ABOUT YOU.


KOTSu
(CLACK)

KOTSu
KOTSu

KOTSu

.....
THINK-
ING
BACK
...

UM DIA AS COISAS...

...I'VE ALWAYS GOTTEN THE SHORT END OF THE STICK.

...EVER SINCE I WAS A BOY...

...BUT I DESTROYED MY DOMINANT ARM IN A TRAINING ACCIDENT.

THE HOUSE OF ABARTH HAS A LONG MILITARY HISTORY...

EVEN OUR RETAINERS CAST ME ASIDE, TREATED ME AS USELESS.

AFTER THAT, MY FATHER AND MOTHER...

.....NO...

I HOPED TO MAINTAIN MY HONOR AS A MILITARY MAN EVEN WITHOUT A SWORD.

THAT LED ME TO DABBLE IN MAGIC.

...MY TALENT AS A WIZARD WAS BELOW AVERAGE.

BUT I WAS FORCED TO REALIZE THAT NO MATTER HOW DILIGENTLY I STUDIED MAGIC...

I CAME CLOSE TO DEATH AGAIN AND AGAIN.....

THAT WAS PRECISELY WHY I FOUGHT IN THAT LAST WAR—TO MAKE A NAME FOR MYSELF AS A WIZARD.

AND MY EFFORTS WERE REWARDED.

I BECAME A HERO IN BOTH NAME AND REALITY.

THE SWORDSMEN AND KNIGHTS WHO HAD HUMILIATED ME WERE NO LONGER A MATCH FOR ME.

NO ONE COULD THREATEN ME ANY LONGER.

I GAINED UN-SHAKE-ABLE POWER.

POTA

POTA...

POTA (DRIP)

POTA

BUT THEN SHE APPEARED.

A GHOST FROM MY PAST...

...COME TO LEAD ME TO DESTRUC-TION.

I KNOW I KILLED HER... HOW CAN I BE SEEING HER NOW...!?

DAN CWHAM

I'LL NEVER LET YOU HAVE IT... IT'S MY POWER... MY EVERY-THING...!

YURA (SWAY)

45

—HEH HEH...!

YOU KEEP OUT OF MY WAY!

IF IT DIDN'T TAKE THE FIRST TIME...I'LL JUST HAVE TO KILL HER AGAIN!

THIEF ...!!

episode 7: END

—When I meet my foe...

...I will not hesitate for a moment...

KOTSU KOTSU

...!?

I am a weapon

ZANA RUSTLE

KOTSU

...to destroy my enemy.

KURUN (WHIRL)

PASHI (CATCH)

B WHIP

HERE I COME...!

GUGU (ZWMM)

CHIR

CHIRI (CRACKLE)

HIS HAIR IS AS RED AS IF IT'S BEEN DYED IN BLOOD...

I SEE... YOU'RE...

...A SABO-TEUR!

episode 6:

The Hero's Gundo

GO

GO (WHAM)

GOKYA (SMASH)

GASHA (CLANG)

BI (WIP)

BAKYA (SMASH)

GO

WHICH ONE IS IT!?

WHERE IS THE GUNDO!?

DO (BAM)

WE DON'T HAVE TIME TO WAIT!

WHAT-EVER HE MAY HAVE SAID...

WAIT A LITTLE!

FLOW OF MAGIC...

DEFI-NITELY THIS ROOM...

...AS LONG AS THE COUNT IS USING THIS POWER, MY BROTHER'S CHANCES OF VICTORY ARE SLIM.

AKARI.

THAT WALL ...!

OUT OF MY WAY!

BA (LUNGE)

DO (SMASH)

...!

GARA (CRUMBLE)

IS THIS IT...?

!?

BACHI! (ZZZAP)

A DEFENSIVE BARRIER ...!?

IS IT GUARDED BY THE SAME POWER THE COUNT IS USING...!?

FURA (SWAY)

...I FIND.

MOVE.

BE CARE-FUL! DON'T TOUCH IT!

'BA (BAM)

OUT OF WAY.

I DISARM IT.

THEN...

...TAKE BACK.

SHE'S OBSESSED WITH THIS THING.

...THIS IS NOT THE LITTLE GIRL I KNOW...!

BA SHAK

JUST WHAT IS IT?

...HAH HAH!

ズズ (ZUZU (SLIDE))

PTOO!

BUT YOU'RE MERELY SKITTERING BACK AND FORTH LIKE A RAT.

HERE I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT GIVE ME A SHOW...

YORO (STAGGER)

I HAVE YOU CORNERED ...

CHECK-MATE.

HA!

I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALK-ING ABOUT.

GL GRIP

THE THING ABOUT SABO-TEURS IS...

BO
GFWOOM)

PITA
(STOP)

A FOOL'S RE-FRAIN!

BLUWA
GBWOOOSH)

BI
GFWIP)

...WE'RE NOT LIKE KNIGHTS OR SWORDS-MEN!

DO (SHIKO)

WHA ...?

GUCHU (SPLRCH)

BA (WHOOSH)

KUN (YANK)

JUST AS I PREDICTED.

SLAAAH!

HYUN

HYUN (SWISH)

THAT MAGIC OF YOURS ...

IT LOOKS LIKE IT CAN BLOCK ATTACKS FROM ANY DIRECTION, BUT IT CAN'T DEFEND AGAINST SOMETHING COMING AT YOU FROM A BLIND SPOT.

ESPE-CIALLY IF IT'S FROM OVERHEAD.

GNH!

I WANT-ED YOU HERE.

PASH! (CATCH)

THIS PLACE IS A DEAD-END WHERE THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY AN ATTACK CAN COME FROM.

YOU THOUGHT I WAS RUNNING AWAY FROM YOU?

SENSE...!

...WHY DON'T YOU SURRENDER NOW?

YOU OUGHTA GET THAT LOOKED AT...

GuGuGu (STRAIN)

ｶﾞｶﾞﾝ...

ENOUGH OF THIS NONSENSE... YOU'RE JUST A LOWLY SABOTEUR...!

I CAN'T AFFORD TO LOSE IT...!

IT GAVE ME EVERY-THING!

ZUOOOO (ZWWMM)

MY HONOR, MY AUTHOR-ITY!

IT GAVE ME MY POSI-TION!

SO MY BLUFF'S NOT GONNA WORK, HUH...!?

CAN YOU GET TO IT IN TIME, AKARI...?

TCH!

DA (THMP)

CHAIKA!

KOFF ...!

MEKI (CRACK)

KOFF!

KOFF!

DOSA (THUD)

IT LOOKS LIKE CHAIKA AND AKARI DID IT...

...NH ...!?

...WHY CAN'T I...

...USE MY MAGIC ...!?

AHH...THE GIRL... SHE'S A WIZARD .....?

.....

HOW DO YOU KNOW CHAIKA?

Y'KNOW, I'VE BEEN WON-DERING ABOUT THAT.

.....IT APPEARS YOU...

GU (YANK)

I PITY YOU...! YOU'RE NOTH-ING BUT A SABO-TEUR.

...YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DEALING WITH...!

KOFF

IF YOU CAN'T CHOOSE YOUR MASTER, YOU'RE JUST A STRAY DOG...

GO ON... KILL ME!

episode 8: END

episode 9: Rejection and...

ZA
(RUSTLE)

—WELL.

IT TOOK LONGER THAN I THOUGHT, BUT WE MADE IT OUT. THAT'S THE IMPORTANT THING.

IS THAT...

GYU (SQUEEZE)

...WHAT YOU WERE LOOKING FOR...?

episode 9:

Rejection and...

TAKE BACK...!

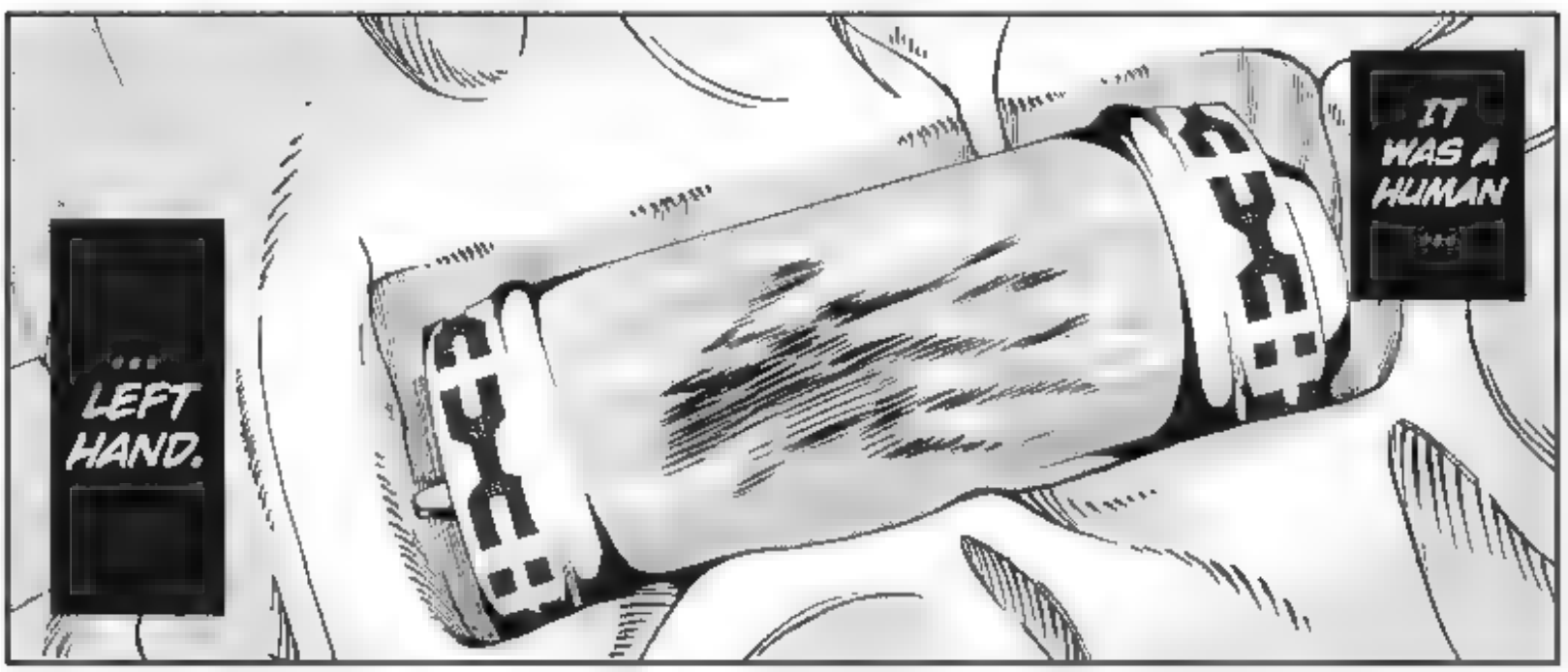
YES. IS IMPOR-TANT.

.....SHE WENT OUT OF HER WAY TO PAY SOME-ONE TO HELP HER...

...SNUCK INTO A NOBLE'S MANSION, AND EVEN JUMPED INTO THE FIGHT HERSELF.

G!!!!! (CREEEAK)

ALL TO GET THAT THING .....


IT WAS A HUMAN
...LEFT HAND.

SO YOUR COFFIN IS FOR HOLDING A PERSON'S HAND?
IS THAT A REAL BODY?

SU (SHFF)
WHOSE IS IT...?

I THANK.

HERE. REST OF MONEY.

YOU CAN WAIT TILL WE GET BACK TO TOWN FIRST...

YOU DON'T HAVE TO GIVE IT TO ME NOW, DO YOU?

...UH...

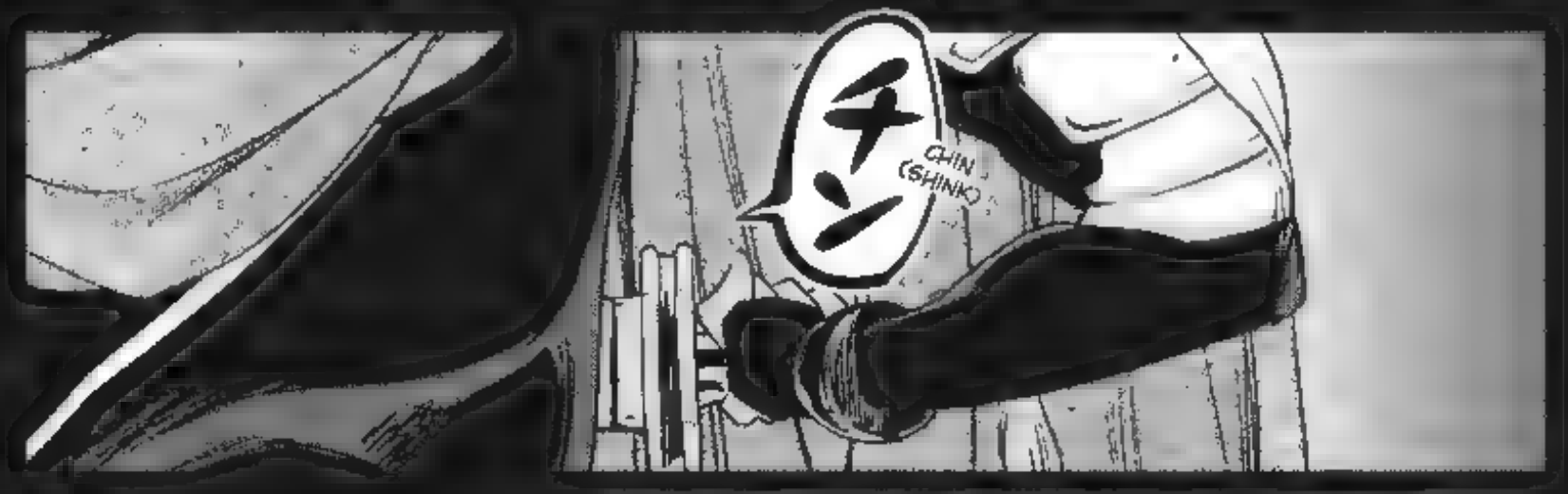
NO! GRATE-FUL!

... ACCEPT!

TO CHAIKA, I'M JUST SOME GUY SHE HIRED FOR A ONE-TIME JOB...
THIS IS HER WAY OF TELLING ME TO STAY OUT OF HER BUSINESS.

WELL, WE WERE STRANG-ERS TO BEGIN WITH.
NOW THAT WE'RE DONE WITH EACH OTHER, WE'LL GO OUR SEPA-RATE WAYS.

...!?
SU (SSK)


CHIN (SHINK)

NH...!

WHY WON'T YOU KILL ME...!? WORTH-LESS MUTT!!!

YOU WOULD HAVE ME LIVE IN SHAME...!?

...I THINK YOU HAVE THE WRONG IDEA.

SUU (SHFF)

KLIEMANN MY FOOT...! I WILL GET YOU BACK FOR THIS—

IT'S JUST LIKE YOU SAID.

...?

I DON'T KNOW WHAT THIS "KLIEMANN" BUSINESS IS ABOUT, BUT I HAVE NO REASON TO KILL YOU.

...I'M JUST...

...A STRAY DOG.

I'M JUST A HIRED HAND. AND WHEN I'M NOT ON A JOB...

BA (LEAP)

I DIDN'T HAVE ANY CHOICE BUT TO GET THE HELL OUT OF THERE.

THE COUNT'S WRATH WAS TREMENDOUS.

A REASON TO LIVE, A GOAL TO STRIVE FOR— I HAD THOSE THINGS ONCE.

MAYBE SOME-WHERE IN THE BACK OF MY MIND, I HAD GOTTEN MY HOPES UP.

HOPES ABOUT THIS GIRL, THIS "CHAIKA TRABANT" ...

TORU?

BUT...

...IF I TAKE THIS MONEY, THEN IT'S ALL OVER.

HYU (SWISH)

PAAN (PWAM)

BA (PWSH)

DARTS!

AWW.

WHO'S THERE!?

KOTSU

KOTSU (CLACK)

I MISSED.

HYU (SWISH)

I'D HOPED TO DESTROY YOUR WILL TO FIGHT IN ONE FELL SWOOP.

BUT IT LOOKS LIKE I AIMED A LITTLE TOO CAREFULLY.

VVV!

MASTER... MASTER GILLET...

AND YOU STARTLED ME, RUNNING OFF LIKE THAT!

A SUR-PRISE AT-TACK!? THAT'S THE COW-ARD'S WAY!

IF YOU'LL EXCUSE MY SAYING SO...

PIKU (TWITCH)

...NOTHING COULD BE A BIGGER WASTE OF TIME THAN TRYING TO HAVE A CIVIL CONVERSATION WITH A SABOTEUR.

PON (PAT)

I WILL ANSWER YOUR QUESTION...

SU (SHFF)

WHAT!? MASTER GILLET!

...WHO ARE YOU?

THEY KNOW WHO WE ARE ...?

WE'LL MEET ON THE HILL.

I'LL GRAB THE COFFIN AND GET IT AWAY FROM THEM.

PA

TAKE CHAIKA AND RUN.

—AKARI.

PA (PWP)

BUT FIRST, YOU WILL ANSWER MINE.

DON (BOOM)

EH?

WE'RE GET-TING OUT OF HERE.

ボソッ

BOSO (WHISPER)

!?

BA (WHIP)

DA (DASH)

BA (LEAP)

ZA ZK SH

ONE MORE SMOKE SCREEN ...!

GA (GRAB)

CHAPTER 08

SHA (SWOOSH)

...HMM.

DAN (THMP)

THIS GUY ...!!

...I SEE. SO THIS IS A SABO-TEUR.

HE'S... REALLY GOOD...!

I'LL HAVE TO MAKE A POINT OF KEEPING MY GUARD UP WITH YOU.

—NO! BAD!

GO BACK!

STOP WHIN-ING.

MEEP ...!

ZUI (LOOM)

IF YOU GIVE ME ANY TROUBLE, I WILL RENDER YOU UNCON-SCIOUS.

IN FACT, HE'S WHAT YOU SHOULD BE WORRYING ABOUT.

YES.

...I SWEAR, THIS GIRL...

WORRY? WHY?

REALLY ?

YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT THE COFFIN, RIGHT? MY BROTHER SAID HE WOULD TAKE CARE OF IT.

THINK ABOUT IT!

THEN WHY TORU...

...NOT RUN?

?

IF ALL HE HAD TO DO WAS RUN AWAY, HE WOULDN'T HAVE TOO MUCH DIFFICULTY.

...AND WE KNOW AT LEAST ONE OF THEM IS VERY SKILLED.

THERE ARE THREE OF THEM...

I SERIOUSLY DOUBT HE'LL BE ABLE TO MAKE A QUICK GETAWAY WITH THAT THING WEIGHING HIM DOWN!

OH...

BECAUSE OF YOUR COFFIN!

YOU STAY HERE.

I'M GOING BACK TO SAVE MY PRECIOUS BROTHER.

...AGREE.

YOU SEE?

NO!

WHY!?

ME TOO ...!

NO!

FROM HERE ON OUT, IT'S OUR PROB-LEM.

WE'VE ALREADY DONE WHAT YOU PAID US FOR.

THIS MY PROB-LEM!

THAT AKARI'S PROB-LEM!

DIF-FERENT PROB-LEMS ...!

I GET COFFIN!

AKARI... GET TORU!

NOT CAN'T!

I TOLD YOU, YOU CAN'T—

SO. WE MAY HAVE DIFFERENT MOTIVES, BUT IF WE'RE AFTER THE SAME OUTCOME, WE SHOULD WORK TOGETHER...
IS THAT WHAT YOU'RE TRYING TO SAY?
YES!

...MAYBE THEY WON'T HAVE CONSIDERED THAT WE MIGHT BE BACK SO SOON...?
TO FIGHT IS TO DECEIVE, AFTER ALL. IT'S A FOOLISH PLAN, BUT...
WHY IN THE WORLD IS SHE SO OBSESSED WITH THAT COFFIN...?
NEVER MIND THAT...

.....
VERY WELL.
WE'LL FIGHT
TOGETHER.

BUT
DON'T
HOLD IT
AGAINST
ME...

...EVEN IF
YOU GET
YOURSELF
KILLED.....

MM!

episode 9: END

...DO YOU KNOW THAT SILVER-HAIRED GIRL?

...HOW EXACTLY...

...WHAT?

MY MEN SAY YOU ARE A SABO-TEUR.

IF YOU ARE MERELY A HIRED HAND...

I'D ADVISE AGAINST HAVING ANYTHING MORE TO DO WITH HER.

...THEN I HAVE NO QUARREL WITH YOU.

GEEZ...

BUT IF YOU INSIST ON FURTHER INTERFER-ENCE—

SU (SHK)

YOU KEEP GOING ON AND ON AS IF I'M SUPPOSED TO HAVE A CLUE WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT...

GASHAN (CLATTER)

.....FINE.

I SUR-RENDER.

episode 10:

Justice for Whom

THAT WAS EASIER THAN I THOUGHT.

MY, MY, THAT IS A SURPRISE.

EVEN I COULD SEE I'D'VE LOST THAT ONE.

LOOK WHO'S TALKING. A KNIGHT, A MERCENARY ...

...AND AN ASSASSIN ...!

I WAS UNDER THE IMPRESSION THAT SABOTEURS WERE STUBBORNLY AND PATHETICALLY OBSESSED WITH VICTORY.

CALM DOWN, VIVI.

YOU'RE JUST ASKING FOR A PAINFUL DEATH, AREN'T YOU!?

WHOEVER THIS MAN MAY BE, OUR OBJECTIVE IS THE GIRL.

DON (PAT)

IF HE AGREED TO WORK FOR HER WITHOUT KNOWING THE CIRCUM-STANCES, THEN HE'S DONE NOTHING WRONG.

I DON'T NEED YOU TO REMIND ME...

YEAH, YEAH. "AGREED WITHOUT KNOWING THE CIRCUM-STANCES"...!

BUT ...

IT'S NOT LIKE I WANT TO BE SOME GNAT, TOSSED AROUND IN THE WIND UNTIL MY WINGS FALL OFF.

I DON'T. THAT'S WHAT I'VE BEEN TRYING TO AVOID ALL MY LIFE.

...THAT DAY, WHEN I WAS A KID—

THE DAY SHE DIED—

I LOST EVERYTHING, INCLUDING MY REASON TO LIVE...

THEN I MET HER.

A GIRL WHO KEEPS LOOKING FOR-WARD.

...I CAN'T JUST WRITE HER OFF AND GO OFF WITHOUT HER...

EVEN IF I'VE ONLY KNOWN HER FOR A SHORT TIME...

...YOU'RE A SABO-TEUR, AREN'T YOU?

YES, I AM A KNIGHT. BUT THAT'S EXACTLY WHY...

IF YOU'VE MADE HER YOUR NEW MASTER, THAT'S ONE THING.

BUT IF YOU HAVEN'T, SURELY YOU ARE UNDER NO OBLIGA-TION TO PROTECT HER.

...I WANT TO AVOID UNNEC-ESSARY VIOLENCE.

TCH.

I'VE HEARD THAT SABO-TEURS ARE EX-TREME-LY PRAG-MATIC.

WELL, ISN'T THAT NOBLE...

IN THAT RESPECT, MAYBE I'M NOT CUT OUT TO BE A SABOTEUR.

WE KNOW...

...YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ATTACK ON COUNT ABARTH'S ESTATE.

NOW.

I DON'T MEAN TO ACCUSE YOU.

ALL I WANT IS FOR YOU TO RETURN WHAT YOU STOLE TO US.

THAT AND THE GIRL ARE ALL WE ARE AFTER.

SABOTEURS ARE LOYAL DOGS. HE'LL NEVER TALK.

IT'S IN THE COFFIN.

MASTER GILLET, YOU'RE WASTING YOUR BREATH TRYING TO NEGOTIATE!

HE MEANS THAT HAND ...?

EH?

I SAID, IT'S IN THE COFFIN.

YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT THAT HAND, RIGHT?

AND JUST SO YOU KNOW...

WELL, I SUPPOSE EVEN SABOTEURS VALUE THEIR OWN LIVES.

OH, IS IT?

UH...

EEK!?

GATA (SHUDDER)

TRY TO FORCE IT OPEN, AND IT'LL EXPLODE.

...THE COFFIN'S RIGGED.

...THIS MIGHT BE EASIER THAN I THOUGHT...

WHY, YOU...!? YOU'D BETTER NOT BE BLUFFING!

..... VERY WELL.

SO WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO, SIR KNIGHT?

PERSON-ALLY, I DON'T WANT TO GET DRAGGED INTO THIS.

DON'T MAKE ANY FUNNY MOVES. DISMANTLE THE TRAP AND GIVE US THE HAND.

CHAKI (KSHING)

BUTSU (SLICE)

...SO THEY KNOW THAT CHAIKA IS COLLECTING BODY PARTS.

OKAY, OKAY.

COME TO THINK OF IT, I NEVER ANSWERED YOUR QUESTION. WE ARE ACTING UNDER INTER-GOVERNMENTAL ORDERS.

OF COURSE.

トョョ

-HYOKO (POP)

UN-LIKE YOU!

NN?

...YOU...

YOU KNOW WHO CHAIKA IS?

JUSTICE ...

GI (CREAK)

RIGHT ...

WE DO WHAT WE DO BECAUSE IT IS RIGHT.

WE ARE JUS-TICE.

YES, THAT'S IT.

NOW GIVE IT TO ME.

THIS IS WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT, RIGHT?

PA (DROP)

I SEE.

TO (SNAG)

AKARI, CATCH!

BI (WHIP)

JA (SLASH)

LORD GILLET!

ZAZAZAZAZA (SKIIIID)

VIVI, AFTER HER!

Y-

YES, SIR!

YOU CAN NEVER LET YOUR GUARD DOWN AROUND A SABOTEUR.

YOU MIGHT HAVE ONLY MADE IT LOOK LIKE YOU HAVE FRIENDS NEARBY TO SCATTER US...

JAKI (CHINK)

...YOU'RE NOT GOING AFTER THEM?

FOR ALL I KNOW, YOU ONLY PRETENDED TO KICK IT AWAY.

I'M NOT THAT CLEVER.

SU (SHFF)

DO (STOMP)

SHIN (SLICE)

I'M NOT AS MERCI-FUL AS LORD GILLET ...!

GYA
(CLASH)

GA
GA
GA
GA
GA
GA
GA
(WHACK)

KUH!

HYU (SWISH)

A BIG GUY WITH A BIG SWORD. I DOUBT SPEED IS HIS FORTE...!

GNH ...!

GYA (CLASH)

(SHNK)

HE'S...!
ZO
(SHUDDER)

GO (WHAM)

GUO! (WHOOSH)

GAH ...!

GA (WHACK)

ZA

ZA (ZSH)

ZAZAZA (GK!!!D)

GU (SHFF)

SINCE WHEN DO MERCE-NARIES KNOW HOW TO BOX...!?

GU (WIPE)

SABO-TEUR ...!

.....YOU'RE NOT GOING TO WHINE ABOUT ME NOT FIGHTING FAIR, ARE YOU?

NO... CAN'T COMPLAIN ABOUT THAT.

I HAVEN'T HAD THIS MUCH FUN IN A LONG—

GO (WHAM)

YOU KNOW, YOU'RE PRETTY GOOD, KID.

DO (THUD)

HUH?

DA (DASH)

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, BROTHER!?

WHAT'S THE MATTER?

NOTH-ING...

THANKS FOR SAVING ME...I'M JUST, KINDA...

CHAIKA!

HFF!

HFF!

TORU!

YEAH... MORE OR LESS.

YOU SAFE?

AND...

...THING!

WHERE?

SORRY. I KICKED THE HAND INTO THE WOODS.

JITA (FLAIL)

BUT TORU ...!

BATA (FLAP)

WE DON'T NEED TO GO FIND IT.

GA (GRAB)

STOP.

BESIDES, I HAVE AN IDEA... CHAIKA...

IF WE WAIT HERE, THEY'LL BRING IT TO US.

...WILL YOU HELP ME?

GASA (RUSTLE)

MASTER GILLET, IS THIS THE...?

YES... BUT WE NEED TO HAVE ZEETA OR MATTHEUS HAVE A LOOK AT IT BEFORE WE CAN BE SURE IT'S THE REAL THING...

ANYWAY, LET'S GO BACK. NICOLAI CAN HANDLE HIMSELF, BUT I'M WORRIED ABOUT THE BOY.

I THINK HE'S PROB-ABLY MINCE-MEAT BY NOW, BUT OKAY.

!

GASA (RUSTLE)

GASA

YO.

WHAT TOOK YOU SO LONG, SIR KNIGHT?

episode 10: END

from Ichirou Sakaki

WHEN AN AUTHOR'S LIGHT NOVEL IS MADE INTO A MANGA, THE MANGA ALLOWS THE INCLUSION OF A LOT OF EXTRA MATERIAL THAT COULDN'T BE EXPRESSED IN THE ORIGINAL PROSE OR ILLUSTRATIONS, AND SO THE WRITER MAY VIEW IT AS A NICE COMPLEMENT TO THE NOVEL. BUT SOMETIMES THE MANGA ARTIST WILL PRODUCE A DIFFERENT INTERPRETATION OF THE SOURCE MATERIAL, AND TOTALLY NEW INFORMATION WILL POP UP, AND THAT'S FUN TOO. AS AN EXAMPLE OF SOMETHING THAT WASN'T IN THE NOVELS, LOOK AT THE SCENES WITH YOUNG TORU AND AKARI WITH JASMÍN—IN THE MANGA VERSION, TORU GRABS JASMÍN'S CHEST AND AKARI BEATS HIM UP. THOSE THINGS DON'T HAPPEN IN THE NOVEL, OR RATHER, THEY'RE DEPICTED SLIGHTLY DIFFERENTLY FROM THE NOVEL VERSIONS OF TORU AND AKARI. (TORU ISN'T OFTEN THE INSTIGATOR OF SUCH CRUDE ADULT HUMOR.) ON THE OTHER HAND, IMAGINING WAYS TO FILL IN THE GAPS—WHAT KINDS OF TWISTS AND TURNS HAPPENED ALONG THE WAY TO TURN THOSE TWO INTO THE PEOPLE THEY ARE NOW—IS ALSO FUN AND INTERESTING. FOR EXAMPLE, WHAT MADE TORU THE WAY HE IS NOW? WHY DOES HE SEEM SOMEWHAT DISINTERESTED IN NAUGHTY JOKES? OR, FOR EXAMPLE, IF AKARI WAS SO MUCH STRONGER BACK THEN, WHY ARE THEY ABOUT EQUAL NOW? MAYBE JASMÍN'S DEATH KILLED TORU'S INTEREST IN THE OPPOSITE SEX. AND AS A RESULT, MAYBE HE DEVOTED HIMSELF EXCESSIVELY TO HIS TRAINING SO THAT, WHILE HIS SKILL AS A SABOTEUR GREW EXPONENTIALLY, HIS MENTAL GROWTH STOPPED COMPLETELY. AND AKARI HAS BEEN BY HIS SIDE, WORRYING ABOUT THE IMBALANCE ALL THIS TIME. AND THEN, WHEN WE GET TO THE MAIN STORY, MAYBE TORU'S ENCOUNTER WITH CHAIKA REACTIVATED HIS ROMANTIC EMOTIONS, RESTARTING THEIR GRADUAL GROWTH. WHILE I CAN'T PUT THESE SPECULATIONS IN THE STORY PROPER (CHAIKA WOULDN'T BE IN THEM, SO IT WOULD GO AGAINST THE TITLE OF THE SERIES—HA-HA), THESE EPISODES DO FORM IN MY HEAD AS I READ THE MANGA, AND IT'S A LOT OF FUN. THEY'RE ALL MINOR DETAILS, BUT THESE ASPECTS—THIS PART OF THE ADAPTED MANGA—IS THE BEST PART OF MEDIA MIXING, AND THESE ARE THE THINGS I THINK ABOUT WHILE I READ THE MANGA VERSION.

ICHIROU SAKAKI

from Namaniku ATK

WORKING AWAY FROM HOME
AFTERWORD
CONGRATULATIONS ON RELEASING VOLUME TWO!!
IT COMES OUT IN AUGUST, SO I PUT VIVI IN A SUMMERY OUTFIT THAT I THOUGHT WOULD LOOK GOOD ON HER.

THANK YOU FOR BUYING VOLUME TWO OF CHAIKA: THE COFFIN PRINCESS.

WOW, BEFORE I EVEN KNEW WHAT WAS HAPPENING, VOLUME TWO IS ON SALE. TIME FLIES. THIS VOLUME INCLUDES THE STORY OF TORU'S PAST. I DID THE CHARACTER DESIGN FOR THE MANGA VERSION OF JASMIN ALL BY MYSELF, SO I WAS NERVOUS ABOUT WHETHER OR NOT IT WOULD DESTROY EVERYONE'S IMAGE OF HER FROM THE NOVEL, BUT PERSONALLY I LIKE IT.

I'M REALLY HAPPY TO HAVE COMMENTS IN THIS VOLUME AND THE PREVIOUS ONE FROM SAKAKI-SENSEI AND NAMANIKU ATK-SAN. I WILL KEEP DOING MY BEST...! AND I HAVE THE UTMOST GRATITUDE FOR MY ASSISTANTS TOO.

AND OF COURSE... I WANT TO THANK ALL YOU READERS WHO PICKED UP THIS BOOK!

LET'S MEET AGAIN IN THE NEXT VOLUME.

2012.8

SHINTA SAKAYAMA

CHAIKA: THE COFFIN PRINCESS 2

Original Story By: ICHIROU SAKAKI
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